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Prosecution by the Police for the non-payment of motor tax.

* 137 *Q.*—Mr. P. V. Krishnayya Choudari: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government are aware that for non-payment of motor tax, the Police are launching prosecutions without giving any notice and without giving any opportunity to owners to pay the tax without being prosecuted;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that such prosecutions for non-payment have been launched after the fixed date without finding out whether the tax had been paid after the given date; and

(*c*) whether the Government have any proposal before them of amending the rules with a view to lessen the difficulties of the owners of motor vehicles?

A.—(*a*) The Government have issued instructions to the effect that owners of motor vehicles should be allowed a week's period of grace within which to pay the tax due before action is taken to prosecute them. The Government have no reason to think that these instructions are not being observed.

(*b*) No such instance has come to the notice of the Government.

(*c*) No. If any suggestions are received, they will be duly considered.

Agriculture

Contributions to the United Planters' Association of South India.

* 138 *Q.*—Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether any contribution is paid by the Government to the United Planters' Association of South India and, if so, what the extent and purpose is of their contribution; and

(*b*) whether Indians are allowed as members of the said association?

A.—(*a*) A contribution of Rs. 28,000 per annum is paid to the Association for the conduct of scientific work in connexion with the planting industries in Southern India.

(*b*) Yes.

Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—" With reference to the answer to clause (*a*) of this question, may I ask the nature of the scientific work conducted by the United Planters' Association of South India? "

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" I must ask for notice."

Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—" May I ask whether the Government have at any time seen the nature of this work in view of the fact that they are making a contribution? "

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" I must ask for notice."

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Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—" May I know whether any report is submitted by this Association to the Government every year as regards the manner in which they spend this sum of Rs. 28,000?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" I cannot say offhand."

Mr. T. S. Ramaswami Ayyar:—" May I know whether this is in the nature of a block grant given every year?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" Yes, for a period of five years."

Mr. T. S. Ramaswami Ayyar:—" Irrespective of the work done?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" For the work that has to be done."

Mr. W. K. M. Langley:—" May I ask the hon. Minister whether it is not a fact that the Members of the United Planters' Association contribute approximately three times as much as the funds contributed for research by the Government?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" I believe so. This is only a part contribution from Government."

Mr. Yakub Hasan Sait:—" Will the hon. Minister call for a report for these five years?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" Report about what?"

Mr. Yakub Hasan Sait:—" About the expenditure of this sum and other sums?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" The matter will be considered."

Mr. Basheer Ahmed Sayeed:—" May I know in what area this research work is being carried on?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" The area is the Nilgiri and neighbouring districts."

Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—" May I know the number of Indians who are members of this Association?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" Notice, Sir."

Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—" May I know whether the hon. Minister will call for a report from the Association regarding the strength of Indian members?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" I will call for the information."

Mr. W. K. M. Langley:—" Is it not a fact, Sir, that the research work carried on benefits all planters whether they are Indians or Europeans and whether they are Members of this Association or not?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" I believe all the advantages will be available to everybody."

Mr. V. T. Arasu:—" May I know the nature of the research work supposed to be carried on by this body and for which the grant is made?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" The research is in connexion with the planting industry in Southern India."

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Mr. V. T. Arasu:—" Planting industry is such a wide term which may mean anything. But what is the purpose of the research?"

The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan:—" I must have notice of the question."

Selection of Christians and members of the depressed classes for admission into the Agricultural College, Coimbatore, in 1931 and 1932.

* 139 *Q.*—Mr. M. Devadasan: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(*a*) how many candidates applied for admission into the Agricultural College at Coimbatore in the years 1931 and 1932;

(*b*) what the principle adopted is in the selection of candidates for the college;

(*c*) whether there were depressed classes and Christians among the applicants in the years 1931 and 1932;

(*d*) how many of them were chosen in each category; and

(*e*) how many of them were disqualified and, if so, on what grounds?

A.—(*a*) 321 and 180 fully qualified candidates applied for admission to the Agricultural College in 1931 and 1932, respectively.

(*b*) The selection of students entirely rests with a selection committee appointed by Government. As the College is intended for the scientific and practical training of those who intend to make agriculture their main profession, students are admitted without distinction of caste or creed. Endeavour is however made to ensure, as far as possible, that all parts of the Presidency are fairly represented.

(*c*) There were no depressed class applicants. The number of Christian applicants in 1931 and 1932 were five and ten, respectively.

(*d*) & (*e*) Out of five Christian applicants in 1931 only two candidates were present for the interview and they were both selected. Out of ten Christian applicants in 1932, five were present and four were selected, the other being considered by the committee not fit for selection.

Damage to coconut trees by the leaf pest.

* 140 *Q.*—Mr. M. S. Sreshta: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether representations were made to the Agricultural Department by the Collector of South Kanara and others that much damage was being done to coconut trees by the leaf pest;

(*b*) what action was thereupon taken;

(*c*) why the Pest Act was suspended some years ago;

(*d*) whether there are any statistics as to the amount of damage caused in the province by the leaf pest; and

(*e*) why the use of parasites to kill this pest was stopped?